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It covers (1) U.S. Federal government documents, especially those from executive branch departments and those from the Congressional branch - - Committees, the U.S. General Accounting Office, and the Congressional Budget Office; (2) policy briefs from major private think tanks, especially those in Washington; and (3) major reports from national professional associations. A few new high quality, high relevance think tank-sponsored books are also listed.

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Reports

Item#1

BLACKS UPBEAT ABOUT BLACK PROGRESS, PROSPECTS: A YEAR AFTER OBAMA'S ELECTION. Pew Research Center. January 12, 2010.

A comprehensive new survey of racial attitudes finds that a year after Barack Obama's election, blacks' assessments about the state of black progress in America have improved more dramatically than at any time in the last quarter century. The poll finds an upbeat set of black views on a wide range of matters, including race relations, local community satisfaction and expectations for future black progress. But at the same time, some views on race show little change. Most blacks still have doubts about the basic racial fairness of American society.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

<http://pewsocialtrends.org/assets/pdf/blacks-upbeat-about-black-progress-prospects.pdf> [PDF format, 109 pages].

Item#2

THE CHINESE NAVY'S BUDDING OVERSEAS PRESENCE. The Heritage Foundation. Dean Cheng. January 11, 2010.

According to the report, expanded encounters with the Chinese at sea can serve as an opportunity to signal U.S. strength, resolve, and commitment.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

http://s3.amazonaws.com/thf_media/2010/pdf/wm_2752.pdf [PDF format, 3 pages].

Item#3

CHOOSING THE NATION'S FISCAL FUTURE. National Research Council and National Academy of Public Administration. January 13, 2010.

A mismatch between the federal government's revenues and spending, now and in the foreseeable future, requires heavy borrowing, leading to a large and increasing federal debt. The report assesses the options and possibilities for a sustainable federal budget.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12808 [HTML format with links].

Item#4

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY: ACTIONS NEEDED TO DEVELOP HIGH-QUALITY COST ESTIMATES FOR

CONSTRUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP PROJECTS. U.S. Government Accountability Office. January 2010.

The Department of Energy (DOE) has not had a policy that establishes standards for cost estimating in place for over a decade, and its guidance is outdated and incomplete, making it difficult for the department to oversee the development of high-quality cost estimates by its contractors. The report offers recommendations to DOE.

Full Text:

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10199.pdf> [PDF format, 63 pages].

Item#5

DEVELOPMENT IN HAITI: Q & A with RUTH LEVINE. Center for Global Development. Ruth Levine. January 14, 2010.

The earthquake in Haiti and the U.S.-led humanitarian relief response has drawn attention to one of the world's poorest countries located a mere 600 miles off the coast of the United States. Ruth Levine, CGD senior fellow and vice president for programs and operations, recently visited Haiti as part of a delegation assessing opportunities for donor support to health programs. This was not her first visit to the country: in the mid-1990s, she was responsible for negotiating the Inter-American Development Bank's health programs with the Government of Haiti.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

<http://www.cgdev.org/content/article/detail/1423583/> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#6

EARTHQUAKE INFORMATION FOR 2009. U.S. Geological Survey. January 2010.

At least 1783 deaths worldwide resulted from earthquake activity in 2009. The deadliest earthquake of the year was a magnitude 7.5 event that killed approximately 1117 people in southern Sumatra, Indonesia on Sept. 30, according to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and confirmed by the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). However, the number of earthquake-related fatalities in 2009 was far less than the 2008 count of over 88,000. The high number of fatalities in 2008 was primarily due to the devastating magnitude 7.9 earthquake that occurred in Sichuan, China on May 12.

Full Text:

http://neic.cr.usgs.gov/neis/eq_depot/2009/ [HTML format with links].

Item#7

THE ECONOMICS OF ADAPTATION TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. Center for Global Development. Brian Blankespoor et al. January 11, 2010.

According to the authors, without international assistance, developing countries will adapt to climate change as best they can. Part of the cost will be absorbed by households and part by the public sector. Adaptation costs will themselves be affected by socioeconomic development, which will also be affected by climate change. Without a better understanding of these interactions, it will be difficult for climate negotiators and donor institutions to determine the appropriate levels and modes of adaptation assistance. The paper contributes by assessing the economics of adaptation to extreme weather events.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

<http://www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/1423545> [HTML format with links].

Item#8

IS PENSION INEQUALITY GROWING? Center for Retirement Research at Boston College. Nadia Karamcheva and Geoffrey Sanzenbacher. January 2010.

Employer-sponsored pensions are an important source of retirement income and often make the difference between having a comfortable retirement and just scraping by. Over the past two decades, pension sponsorship and participation have remained relatively constant. At any given point in time, roughly half of private sector workers age 25-64 are covered by pension plans. This constancy, however, masks a growing inequality in pension participation by income that has become more pronounced with the shift from traditional defined benefit plans to defined contribution plans. The brief documents and explores trends in pension participation by income.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

http://crr.bc.edu/images/stories/Briefs/ib_10-1.pdf [PDF format, 6 pages].

Item#9

OBAMA IMAGE UNSCATHED BY TERRORISM CONTROVERSY. Pew Research Center for the People & Press. Andrew Kohut. January 14, 2010.

In the aftermath of the failed Christmas Day terrorist attack on a Detroit-bound airliner, the government's ratings for reducing the threat of terrorism have slipped. In addition, 33% now say that the ability of terrorists to launch a major attack on the U.S. is greater than it was at the time of 9/11; that is up only slightly from November but is the highest percentage expressing this view in surveys dating to 2002. The public also has become far more concerned that government anti-terrorism policies fail to protect the country adequately – and far less concerned that these policies restrict civil liberties.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

<http://people-press.org/reports/pdf/578.pdf> [PDF format, 51 pages].

Item#10

A ROOKIE'S IMPRESSIONS OF COP-15. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Therese Miranda. January 11, 2010.

The Copenhagen Accord represents a small but imperfect step forwards. If efforts are not made to pass Senate legislation, fill in details within the existing U.N. tracks, and bridge the growing divide between developed and developing countries, success will be elusive in Mexico as well, endangering the future of the planet.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

<http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=24679> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#11

U.S.-CUBA RELATIONS. Center for Foreign Relations. Stephanie Hanson. January 11, 2010.

According to the author, despite the changes in both U.S. and Cuban leadership since early 2008, experts do not anticipate any normalization of U.S.-Cuba relations in the near to medium term.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

http://www.cfr.org/publication/11113/uscuba_relations.html?breadcrumb=%2Fpublication%2Fby_type%2Fbackgrounder [HTML format, various paging].